

By [Shea Johnson](#)[Print Page](#)

June 23, 2016 5:04PM

Court approves \$250K settlement in Dan'te Parker in-custody death lawsuits

A federal judge approved a \$250,000 global settlement between San Bernardino County and the family of Dan'te Parker, a deal described Thursday as having "made the most sense" by an attorney representing Parker's wife and five children.

Judge Virginia A. Phillips approved the settlement June 17, federal court records show, effectively putting the stamp on litigation that came in the wake of Parker's in-custody death on Aug. 12, 2014.

"I would describe it as the most favorable of outcomes for all involved parties, plaintiffs and defendants alike," attorney Mark Eisenberg told the Daily Press.

Eisenberg, who represented Bianca Parker and her five kids, said they would gross at least \$210,000 of the settlement, but he could not immediately detail the net money they would receive after legal and other fees.



Dan'te Parker

Additionally, Parker's mother, Deltra Denise Paulk McCoy, would receive \$20,000 in gross money, while Parker's father, Darrell Parker, would receive at least \$10,000 in gross compensation, Eisenberg said.

An additional \$10,000 remains in dispute and could be distributed to either Bianca or Darrell Parker, he said.

Parker, 36, died not long after being taken into custody as a residential burglary suspect in the 12400 block of Luna Road in Victorville. He was combative with responding deputies and under the influence of phencyclidine (PCP), according to authorities and the coroner's report.

He was stunned with a Taser as many as 12 times during the scrum. The District Attorney's office later concluded that deputies were justified in their use of force, outlining in a report the details of the altercation gleaned from interviews with 15 deputies or witnesses.

At least four deputies were involved in the scuffle, with some telling the DA's office that Parker didn't appear to be in the right frame of mind as they recalled his "profuse sweating, dilated eyes and rapid pulse."

He was eventually handcuffed and placed in a patrol car as medical aid was requested. By the time he arrived at the hospital, his temperature hovered around 106 degrees. He went into cardiac arrest and died shortly thereafter.

The autopsy report ruled his death accidental, citing PCP intoxication as the cause of death with contributing factors listed as hypertensive cardiovascular disease, obesity and the physical confrontation with deputies.

The common nucleus of the three separate lawsuits brought by Parker's family, however, alleged that deputies used unnecessary force on Parker and delayed giving him medical attention. They concluded that deputies should not only have realized Parker's medical distress upon making contact, but they also should have acted appropriately in dealing with the emergency and not have stunned him repeatedly.

Eisenberg said Thursday he did not believe the plaintiffs would have been able to prevail in a wrongful death action "given the amount of PCP in Mr. Parker's system." But the case resolved due to a survivor action, which seeks compensation for pain and suffering experienced by the decedent prior to death.

He added that Bianca Parker had already conveyed plans for her and her children's share of the settlement.

"The monies will be shared in part by the children and by Bianca," Eisenberg said, "with an emphasis toward applying that money toward educational purposes."

The county did not have a comment on the settlement.

Parker was employed by the Daily Press at the time of his death.

Shea Johnson may be reached at 760-955-5368 or SJohnson@VVDailyPress.com. Follow him on Twitter at @DP_Shea.

<http://www.vvdailypress.com/article/20160623/NEWS/160629861>

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Inland Valley Daily Bulletin (<http://www.dailybulletin.com>)

Which Inland Valley city signed up for the most library cards?

By Penny Arévalo, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Thursday, June 23, 2016



Libraries are in the business of getting people to read more, so it wouldn't be surprising to hear about a push to get more library cards in the hands of residents, young and old alike.

What may be surprising is how much more successful the San Bernardino County libraries were at it this year.

The annual summer reading drive, called Vision2Read's Summer Reading Challenge, starts in May with the library card promotion. Last year, 7,892 new cardholders registered in May.

But this year saw 9,036 new cards issued, an increase of — wait for it

— 14.5 percent.

Our investments should be so lucky.

But what you really want to know is, where are all these bookworms? Here's how the top three libraries fared:

3) Rancho Cucamonga Public Library: 840 signups

2) Ontario City Library: 855 signups

1) Fontana Lewis Library and Technology Center: 1,145 signups

Feeling a wee bit superior Inland Valley?

“Reading is the coolest thing you can do this summer so we are thrilled so many more of our residents throughout the county are taking advantage of our libraries and what they have to offer,” James Ramos, chairman of the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors, said in a statement.

While books can make a summer's day breeze by, there's a more serious motive than entertainment. According to a county library press release, 69 percent of San Bernardino County third-graders do not meet new California English language arts and literacy standards and 32 million adults nationwide can't read.

Throughout the summer, the local libraries are offering amazing programs and activities and giving away rewards for meeting reading challenges. For students, summer reading programs help to avoid a loss of reading skills that can occur during breaks in the academic school year.

To find out more, go to Vision2Read.com.

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Zoo Construction Could Begin July 5

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Big Bear Alpine Zoo Construction Could Begin July 5

in [News](#), [Ticker](#) / by [Michael P. Neufeld](#) / on June 24, 2016 at 12:04 am /

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Once the dignitaries turned the first shovel of dirt for the “new” Big Bear Alpine Zoo, the zoo’s team took their turn as they anticipate the start of construction on or about July 5. (Contributed Photo)

By **Michael P. Neufeld**

Big Bear Lake, CA – Construction of the “new” Big Bear Alpine Zoo (BBAZ) could begin as early as Tuesday, July 5, according to Big Bear Valley Recreation and Park District Operations Manager Reese Troublefield.



In the latest edition of the district’s newsletter, Troublefield indicated crews from M. S. Construction Management Group could be on the job the day after the 4th of July weekend to begin the \$10.4 million project.

“Construction,” Troublefield explained, “is scheduled to be completed by December 21, 2017.”

Troublefield went on to state, “We will of course have to move the animals over so both facilities will be closed for a short period while in transition after completion.”

The “new” BBAZ could open sometime between March 15 and Memorial Day weekend, 2018, he noted.



Yuhaaviat, a red tailed hawk, is the new animal ambassador for the BBAZ and is being displayed by lead keeper Christy McGiveron. The new ambassador was named during a Native American ceremony conducted by Supervisor James Ramos and his son, James Jr. (Contributed Photo)

YUHAAVIAT NEW ANIMAL AMBASSADOR

During the May 27 ground breaking ceremony, BBAZ gained a new animal ambassador — YAHAAVIAT — the zoo’s fledgling Red Tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*).

The hawk — recently brought to the zoo from the Baldwin Lake area — has been imprinted by humans and cannot be released back into the wild.

Third District Supervisor James Ramos and his son, James Jr., presided over an official Native American naming ceremony during the groundbreaking ceremony. The two members of the Serrano Indian tribe chose Yuhaaviat’s name because it means Big Bear Valley.



This is an artist's rendering of the entrance to the BBAZ. (Contributed Photo)

RELOCATION PROJECT

The BBAZ is being relocated to a property owned by the Big Bear Valley Recreation and Park District (BBVRPD) within the City of Big Bear Lake's Moonridge business corridor.

It is to be located at the corner of Moonridge Road and Club View Road at the Moonridge "Y."

When completed in 2018, the "new" complex will feature five marquee exhibits (Grizzly Bear, Timber Wolf, Mountain Lion, Black Bear, and Snow Leopard), along with an Administration Building, Snack Bar, Ticket and Gift Shop, and multiple additional exhibits to relocate the entire collection.

(42)



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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

Commission postpones vote on natural gas pipeline through San Bernardino County

By Imran Ghori, The Press-Enterprise

Thursday, June 23, 2016

The California Public Utilities Commission has again postponed a vote on a proposal to build a 65-mile natural gas pipeline through San Bernardino County to Moreno Valley.

No reason was given for the postponement at the commission's meeting Thursday, June 23, the third delay since May. No date was given for when it will return for a vote.

The pipeline would run from a pumping station in Adelanto, in the High Desert, to one in Moreno Valley. It would roughly follow I-15 through the Cajon Pass and then east along I-215 to San Bernardino.

A commission judge has recommended denial of the project. San Bernardino city officials have opposed it, saying it would disrupt major neighborhoods in the city.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/business/20160623/commission-postpones-vote-on-natural-gas-pipeline-through-san-bernardino-county>

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Consumer spending soars in San Bernardino County

INLAND EMPIRE - (INT) - Consumer and business spending in the Inland Empire have been gaining traction, particularly in San Bernardino County, according to a new analysis. Taxable sales is growing at more than twice the rate of Riverside County.

The UC Riverside School of Business found that that spending increased in nearly every category in the Inland Empire with the exception of Fuel and Service Stations which was down 11.2% because of a significant drop in gasoline prices.

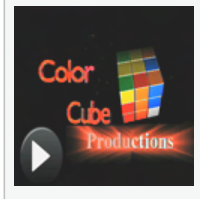
Taxable sales in the Inland Empire as a whole increased by 6.4%. At the County level, sales jumped by 8.9% in San Bernardino County, compared to 3.7% in Riverside County. Taxable sales growth in both counties, however, outpaced growth in California overall, which was 3 percent.

The data applies to the period from the 4th quarter of 2014 to the 4th quarter of 2015.

In a separate analysis, the UCR School of Business found that Asian-owned businesses survived the recession quite well. Revenues in California grew by 30 percent from 2007-12 while total revenue growth among all businesses in the state was 8.2 percent.

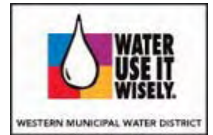
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LOCAL / L.A. Now

Lack of preparation for massive earthquake could bring catastrophe, report says



Sylmar resident Brian Demetz runs from his burning home in Sylmar on Jan. 17, 1994, after the Northridge earthquake. (Ken Lubas / Los Angeles Times)

By **Rong-Gong Lin II**

JUNE 23, 2016, 11:27 AM

Southern California's smaller cities and large businesses must take the threat of a crippling earthquake far more seriously than they have been, a committee of business, public policy and utility leaders said Thursday, saying action is needed to "prevent the inevitable disaster from becoming a catastrophe."

Despite strides made by the city of Los Angeles to focus on earthquake safety, Southern California still faces significant threats that haven't been resolved.

One of the most ominous is the looming threat on the edge of Southern California's sprawling metropolis — the Cajon Pass. It's a narrow mountain pass where the San Andreas fault — California's longest and one of its most dangerous — intersects with combustible natural gas and petroleum pipelines, electrical transmission lines, train tracks and Interstate 15 north of San Bernardino.

A huge earthquake on the San Andreas could move one side of the fault as much as 30 feet from the other. Such an earthquake would rupture flammable pipelines and lead to a catastrophic explosion so powerful it leaves behind a crater.

And if utilities aren't able to shut off the flow of petroleum or natural gas, firefighters could be helpless to keep a raging wildfire from spreading across the San Gabriel and San Bernardino mountains, just as the rest of Southern California staggers from the worst earthquake it has seen in more than 150 years.

There are solutions to these problems, said seismologist Lucy Jones, who advised the Southern California Disaster Risk Initiative Committee. But little has been done precisely because many people don't know the extent of the problems, and, if they do, fixing them seems so daunting.

"Don't fall into the trap of, 'It's so impossible, so we can't do anything,' or, 'We have to do everything.' Take a piece. Get it done. You're now better off. Go on to the next one," Jones said. "There's plenty that can be done."

Among those pushing for fixes are executives for Southern California Edison, the Southern California Gas Co., the Walt Disney Company, and Wells Fargo, along with the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation, USC, the Port of Los Angeles and the Southern California Assn. of Governments.

Their pitch: create a Southern California Disaster Risk Reduction Initiative, intended to highlight the unresolved earthquake risks and convince decision makers to fix them. The group issued a [report](#) with recommendations on Thursday.

"It's easier to bury your head in the sand, but that's no longer an acceptable answer," said John Bwarie, the committee's project coordinator.

Here are five major threats Southern California faces that could imperil our ability to recover after a massive earthquake strikes the San Andreas fault, and how they could be fixed:

1. Fixing the Cajon Pass.

One way to reduce the risk of catastrophe at the Cajon Pass would be to put shutoff valves on both sides of the San Andreas fault on petroleum and natural gas pipelines. If the pipelines are automatically turned off during the earthquake, it could prevent huge amounts of fuel from being ignited if the pipelines break, Jones said. Officials say a big quake on the San Andreas is overdue.

Small changes can make a big difference. Jones recalled the meltdown of a Japanese nuclear power plant after a 9.0 earthquake and tsunami hit in 2011.

A meltdown might've been avoided had the backup cooling system's diesel fuel was stored at a higher elevation, keeping it functioning even after the tsunami hit, she said.

2. In cities, water pipes and natural gas lines will burst during shaking.

The reality is disturbing — burst water pipes could leave parts of Southern California without running water for six months. Natural gas pipelines can fuel dangerous city fires.

Some experts point out that it's impractical to retrofit all of Southern California's water pipes with earthquake-resistant, flexible versions in our lifetime. But even some retrofitting would help.

"Not every pipe in the systems needs to be quake-proof, but by targeting key lengths of pipe in the system, enough can be in place to address the firefighting needs of the region," the report said.

Installing more remote-control gas shut-off valves for natural gas transmission and high-pressure distribution pipelines would also help.

3. Large businesses and local politicians may be underestimating the worst-case scenario.

Many people don't know how bad the aftermath of a huge earthquake can be: "Water and power delivery systems could be off for weeks, housing for tens of thousands could be damaged," the report said, an event far worse than experienced by veterans of the 1994 Northridge earthquake.

Large businesses need to develop a plan for getting back to work as quickly as possible. The worst-case scenario would be that major industries, such as aerospace, give up and leave Southern California if the region remains dysfunctional for too long.

That means businesses like banks need to know how to get their branches running as quickly as possible, perhaps by installing backup generators and keeping caches of emergency supplies on site.

If it's too hard to have a home improvement chain keep all of its branches open in, say, Granada Hills, Northridge and Chatsworth, perhaps one plan would be to keep just the Northridge store operational, Bwarie said.

4. Many Southern Californians don't know their neighbors, and that's going to hurt neighborhoods' ability to recover.

A key factor that could determine what neighborhoods survive and which ones are abandoned after an earthquake is how well the neighborhood works together to recover, instead of giving up and leaving town.

Southern California, unfortunately, has a reputation for neighbors not knowing each other.

But things can be done to help establish a sense of community, such as cities encouraging block parties or organizing people to check in on each other after an earthquake.

One idea Jones is working on at her own church is creating a system in which people are assigned to check on each other after an earthquake hits, and complete a drill on that annually.

5. Many cities do not require collapse-prone buildings to be retrofitted.

The city of Los Angeles has moved ahead on requiring apartments and concrete buildings at risk of collapse to be retrofitted, but most of Southern California's vast suburbs have not followed suit.

In fact, there are cities that haven't even done what Los Angeles began in the 1980s: requiring the retrofit of deadly brick buildings, whose bricks turn into projectiles in even slight shaking. The two women who died in the 2003 San Simeon earthquake in Paso Robles died as the facade of an unretrofitted brick building collapsed.

Another problem: The minimum standard for new buildings permits them to be so severely damaged in an earthquake that it might need to be torn down. The only requirement is that people not be killed by that building in an earthquake.

"Cities have to ask themselves: Are you approving buildings that are designed to fail — but won't kill anyone? That doesn't do much for our economy," Bwarie said.

The committee suggests creating a uniform standard that would make it easier for building owners to choose higher levels of minimum safety, such as a building that would remain in operation even after a significant earthquake.

"Southern California's vulnerability to natural disasters demands that we look forward and prepare," Hasan Ikhrata, executive director of the Southern California Assn. of Governments, said in a statement. "It is critical to our economy, and to the 18 million residents in the region."

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[Who killed college student Michelle O'Keefe? New twist in 16-year-old murder mystery](#)

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UPDATES:

11:25 a.m. Updated with more information about San Andreas.

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

Nearly 200 SoCal cities unprepared for 'the big one,' experts say

By Susan Abram, Los Angeles Daily News

Thursday, June 23, 2016



Facing threats of earthquakes, wildfires and floods, almost 200 Southern California cities depend too much on big government to protect them, which will lead to slower recovery time when “the big one” hits, according to experts on disaster preparedness.

A report released Thursday as part of the newly launched [SoCal Disaster Risk Reduction Initiative](#), was presented at USC. It urged community members to ask tougher questions of their own civic leaders, such as — How reliable are the infrastructure and utilities that carry electricity and water? What happens if the freeways collapse? Where should residents go if their homes are destroyed?

“Our impending catastrophe is so obvious,” said retired [USGS seismologist Lucy Jones](#), whose research includes the [ShakeOut scenario](#), which shows the effect of a 7.8-magnitude earthquake on the San Andreas fault in Southern California. The ShakeOut scenario is being used as a blueprint for building-code improvement by the city of Los Angeles.

“We need to strengthen community relationships to get through this,” Jones said. “Earthquakes are treated too much like a response problem. We spend eight times more on response than prevention.”

Jones is serving as a special adviser to the team of academics and leaders within the public and private sectors, who launched the initiative. In the next few weeks, the group will focus on recommendations on how to make Southern California more prepared a disaster. The group will look at infrastructure, urge education about the realities of the impact of a disaster, promote the strength of communities, and address gaps in building codes.

“With this initiative, we want to help build a more resilient Southern California, one where communities across the Southland work hand-in-hand with the government,” said Raphael Bostic, director of the [USC Bedrosian Center](#), which collaborated on the initiative. “Our ultimate goal is comprehensive engagement with local communities, businesses and authorities, so they make the right disaster risk reduction decisions themselves.”

Bostic and others pointed to Hurricane Katrina, which struck the Gulf states in 2005, killing 1,245 people and costing an estimated \$108 billion, according to the [federal government](#). It was the costliest disaster in U.S. history. Recovery in many communities was slow because residents depended too much on big government.

Locally, residents struggled after the 6.7-magnitude [Northridge earthquake](#) struck on January 17, 1994. In Santa Clarita, residents were cut off from water supplies after the Los Angeles Aqueduct along Soledad Canyon Road broke, prompting the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power to shut off water deliveries through the line into the San Fernando Valley. The quake’s force caused highways to collapse, knocked down walls and triggered gas explosions and fires. It also knocked out power to thousands of homes and businesses, as well as hospitals, where doctors struggled to save critically injured people.

History shows that after disaster strikes, many people will leave the area, which will affect businesses and the

economy, added Hassan Ikhata, executive director of the [Southern California Association of Governments](#) or SCAG. Ikhata is co-chair of the initiative as well.

“Southern California’s vulnerability to natural disasters demands that we look forward,” Ikhata said. “It is critical to our economy and to the 18 million residents in the region that we strengthen our connections, our infrastructure and build resilience.”

SCAG represents six counties and 191 cities. In the next few weeks, each city will be receiving more information on how community leaders, places of worship and schools can work together to come up with a disaster plan, Ikhata said.

“I guarantee you, that not one of the 191 cities talk about when the ‘big one’ hits,” Ikhata said. “Every single city should be developing resources to make sure we can survive a disaster. Cities need to be a bigger part of the solution.”

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20160623/nearly-200-socal-cities-unprepared-for-the-big-one-experts-say>

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By [Shea Johnson](#)

Print Page

June 23, 2016 11:51AM

Adelanto approves \$7,000 pot manufacturing fees

ADELANTO — Mirroring its fees for medical marijuana cultivation permits, the city set costs for manufacturers late Wednesday at \$7,000 per application.

The fee will cover the costs to the city to process the applications, Senior Planner Mark de Manincor said.

The proposed fee was unanimously approved, meaning anti-medical marijuana City Councilman Ed Camargo also gave it the green-light, a vote that drew jocular teasing from the other members of the dais. Camargo has routinely been the lone "nay" vote on medical marijuana decisions, but said Wednesday he would support funds into the city from the enterprise.

Meanwhile, City Attorney Curtis Wright said the Council will be presented next month with a plan to send an up-to 5-percent excise tax on pot activities to voters in November. The ballot initiative, if approved, will clear the way for Adelanto to draw expected significant revenues on its new cornerstone industry.

Based on conversations earlier this month, the tax would likely apply to each of the five types of medical marijuana enterprises that are expected to be permitted within city limits by the time the measures goes in front of the electorate in less than five months: cultivation, manufacturing, business-to-business distribution and transportation, testing and dispensaries.

Wright said the industry's lift-off would wait for the measure as it made little sense to allow operations without the city benefiting from the steady sources of revenue.

During Wednesday's meeting, the Council was also presented with the city's five-year urban water management plan, spurring Mayor Rich Kerr to wonder if looming medical marijuana operations were factored into the plan.

A representative with PERC Water Corporation answered in the affirmative, saying the plan included the current knowledge of the city's medical marijuana intentions, and "at this point, it's not a substantial amount of water demand."

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<http://www.vvdailypress.com/article/20160623/NEWS/160629869>

Print Page

Fire threatens Highland homes

Posted: Thursday, June 23, 2016 6:43 pm

The second of two suspected arson fires on the day for Highland threatened over a dozen homes on Valaria Drive and 21st Street with four homes receiving minor burn damage. The fire was first reported at 4:20 p.m. and contained by 5:44 p.m. on Thursday, June 23.

According to Capt. Anthony Decicio of the Highland Police Station, citizens who first reported the fire, just inside the San Bernardino city limits, observed, chased and detained two suspects fleeing a homeless encampment where the fire is believed to have started.

Sheriff's deputies then took custody of the suspects and turned them over to the city of San Bernardino Police Department.

According to CalFIRE PIO Debbie Chapman, the fire was first reported as being behind the iHop on Highland Avenue and quickly spread into Highland city limits burning two to three acres of brush and causing minor burn damage to four homes and fences. Residents quickly self-evacuated and no injuries to residents or firefighters were reported.

Twelve engines and five air units from several area departments including Highland Fire Department, San Bernardino City Fire Department and San Manuel Fire Department aided in the "high success of saving homes in the area," said Chapman.

Several residents did what they could by climbing on their roofs and hosing down their homes.

According to Highland Sheriff's deputies, this was the second of two suspected arson fires in Highland, the first being on Base Line east of Boulder Avenue after 12:30 p.m. One suspect was arrested in connection to the Base Line fire. He was identified as Martin Poceno-Rodriguez, 36, of San Bernardino.



Valaria fire

Firefighters from several local departments defend homes from a fire burning just east of Valaria Drive and south of Highland Avenue Thursday, June 23.

San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

How pooling together donations can benefit many nonprofits at once

By Gregory Bradbard, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Thursday, June 23, 2016



What if thousands of generous individuals throughout the Inland Empire pooled their donations to help the most effective local nonprofits addressing our region's most pressing needs?

The result would be a Community Impact Fund that houses the homeless, counsels those in crisis, feeds the hungry and educates tomorrow's workforce. Fortunately, that model is exactly what United Way has done for decades and continues today in our community.

Inland Empire United Way just announced a commitment to provide over \$590,000 to a group of 43 nonprofits serving the Pomona Valley, West End San Bernardino, the Redlands East Valley and the High Desert. Over the next year, each organization will receive a grant

between \$5,000 and \$25,000 to address the goal of meeting people's emergency needs and moving them from poverty to self-sufficiency.

What I love most about our strategy for identifying the best nonprofits in our region is that we use an entirely volunteer-driven decision-making process. More than 20 local volunteers scoured applications and impact reports, reviewed financial and legal information and debated strengths and weaknesses of each organization to ensure we invest only in our community's strongest, most impactful nonprofits.

The result is 43 organizations from Pomona to Redlands to Adelanto that are working daily to improve the education, health and financial stability of local residents. Some have a budget less than \$100,000, and others have multiple sites and multimillion-dollar operations. But all have one trait in common — a demonstrated track record for improving lives.

Many of our Community Impact Partners are part of the vital safety net necessary for addressing the short-term needs of those in crisis. Whether it is a parent who has lost his or her job and can't pay rent, a homeless individual needing food or an underprivileged child needing new shoes, these organizations are on the front lines.

High Desert Homeless Services provides emergency housing to individuals and families for up to 90 days while they seek employment and get back on their feet. HDHS has helped 500-plus homeless families and individuals each year since 1990, providing food, shelter, living skills, parenting classes, budgeting and guidance with job searching.

I had the chance to meet April, a single mom of 12-year-old twin boys, who became homeless and was taken in by HDHS. With tears in her eyes, she thanked me for the shelter's support, saying, "When we got there we didn't need anything. They gave us everything. Everything. I don't know where we would be without them." I'm happy to report that April was able to find employment, an affordable apartment, and her boys are doing well in their new school.

And speaking of youth, we believe that the best strategy to prevent poverty for our next generation is to prepare today's students for future self-sufficiency. Several nonprofits that will be receiving funding are dedicated to that purpose in the form of after-school programs, tutoring and mentoring and career readiness programs aimed at our community's most at-risk youth.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Fontana and Greater Redlands are committed to providing safe locations throughout the Inland Empire where students can spend time after school getting homework help, building positive relationships and preparing for college and future careers. Seventeen thousand, five hundred dollars will be invested in The Boys & Girls Club of Fontana's Great Futures program this next year.

"United Way's support allows us to deliver services to the youth that need us most. It's the piece of the puzzle that allows us to provide programs like college bound and financial literacy that will empower our kids and their families for a lifetime," said Terrie Schneider, Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Club of Fontana.

The list is too long to name each program receiving funding, but I'll share just a few others you might recognize: Big Brothers Big Sisters, Catholic Charities, CASA, Foothill Family Shelter, House of Ruth, Promise Scholars, Reach Out, Ronald McDonald House, Shoes That Fit and THINK Together.

To hear directly from those who are beneficiaries of United Way's support, including April, visit [YouTube.com/InlandEmpireUW](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=InlandEmpireUW) or www.IEUW.org.

Like the [Daily Bulletin on Facebook](#).

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/social-affairs/20160623/how-pooling-together-donations-can-benefit-many-nonprofits-at-once>

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Inland Empire Job Corps puts youth on road to success

By Michel Nolan, The Sun

Thursday, June 23, 2016



If you ask Jesus Ureno why he chose to enroll at the Inland Empire Job Corps, he'll tell you he not only wanted a successful career, he wanted to help those in need and try something out of his comfort zone.

So far, he is succeeding at all three.

"I am still very young and excited about what the future has for me," Jesus told the gathering of business and community leaders Wednesday at the Inland Empire Job Corps Summer Luncheon in San Bernardino.

Adopted by his parents when he was 3 or 4, he wanted to make his mother proud of him, said the 22-year-old, who lives on the Job Corps campus.

He had started working as a seasonal employee at Six Flags, but realized he needed a career so when he heard about Job Corps decided it was a great opportunity to grow as a person and learn something new.

Now, his vocation is tile setting but he plans to attend college and take auto mechanics.

"I love hands-on learning and being active, which is why I picked my trade," he said.

Jesus Ureno is one of the many success stories at Inland Empire Job Corps Center.

From business office technology to carpentry, health occupations to landscape, plumbing, tile setting and welding, the center offers 11 career options for real-world work experience through partnerships with employers.

Wednesday, it was Culinary Arts' turn.

Under the direction of executive chef instructor Michael Geurds, the students prepared and served the annual luncheon — which this year was three cool and refreshing courses — a welcome treat during this week's heat wave.

Last year, rising super-star Chef Aric Ianni, a Job Corps alumnus, returned for the luncheon, collaborating with Chef Michael for the luncheon menu.

Just 23 at the time, Aric started at Job Corps when he was 16, worked his way up to sous chef and landed a cook's position in a prestigious restaurant after graduating.

On Wednesday, Chef Michael announced that Aric is the new executive chef for the Mountainside Bar & Grill at the Mammoth Mountain Inn resort in Mammoth Lakes.

“We have successful chefs all over the world,” Chef Michael said, “but he’s our first executive chef.”

Brittany Vega is on her way as well.

At age 18, Brittany found her first job at a Coachella casino after graduating from high school.

She said she realized she was capable of making more than \$9 an hour, so she decided to go back to school.

Last September, when a friend told her about the Job Corps program in Medical Administrative Assisting, she applied, and jumped for joy when she was accepted.

Brittany got right to work, she said, obtaining many certifications, including her National Medical Administrative Assisting Certification.

But she went even farther.

“So here I am in my first semester towards my degree in biochemistry, none of which would have been possible without the help of Inland Empire Job Corps,” she said.

The Inland Empire Job Corps’ Nursing Assistant trade has been a total success. More than 95 percent of graduates separate with a good-paying job.

Former graduate Rosalba Gonzalez has been a success in the city of Mentone, while former graduates Qadry Presley and Kaila Lawson have found success in the city of Loma Linda at the Heritage Garden Health Care facility.

And the list goes on.

Each spring, I enjoy the luncheon and get an update on the center, which is always upbeat and positive. The no-cost education and career technical training program continuously turns out graduates who become employable and independent, placing them in meaningful jobs or further education.

Administered by the U.S. Department of Labor, the center helps young people ages 16-24 improve their quality of life through career and technical training.

And it’s working.

And here’s a thought for the day: Do not judge by appearances, a rich heart may be under a poor coat.

Michel Nolan appears in The Sun on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays. Reach her at michel.nolan@langnews.com or on Twitter [@MichelNolan](https://twitter.com/MichelNolan).

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/business/20160623/inland-empire-job-corps-puts-youth-on-road-to-success>

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Inland Valley Daily Bulletin (<http://www.dailybulletin.com>)

Mixed-use housing and retail project coming to Chino Hills

By Neil Nisperos, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Thursday, June 23, 2016



CHINO HILLS >>> The city's first mixed-used projects, which integrate housing and retail, will soon be coming to undeveloped land just north of [Chino Hills High School](#).

The arrival of the approved projects, which officials expect to open sometime in 2017, comes at a time when more cities in the region are developing pedestrian-friendly, higher density mixed-use housing and retail projects to meet a market demand and preference from young people and to lessen traffic on roads.

“There’s a great housing shortage and more demand than supply of housing and that’s driving up the price of housing,” said Joann Lombardo, Chino Hills community development manager. “So when we add more units and more variety of units to the housing supply, we make it more affordable because we’re offering a larger variety of types of housing, and there are more options for people to choose from.”

The first two projects will be situated across from each other. One, known as the Santa Barbara project — on 30 acres to the north of Chino Hills High School and bordered by Butterfield Ranch Road, Soquel Canyon Parkway and Pomona Rincon Road — will feature 324 rental units and 16,000 square feet of space for restaurants and retail. The project is being built by the Upland-based Lewis Group of Companies.

The second is being developed by [Trumark Homes](#). Across the northwestern side of Soquel Canyon Parkway, it will have a mix of 42 attached townhomes, 68 smaller lot single-family homes and 39 conventional-sized homes, said Eric Nelson, vice president of community development for Trumark.

“Our goal is to create a vibrant development,” Nelson said. “What we have here is a vibrant mixed-use development. It has commercial and ... different (home) product types. It opens the door to a first-time homebuyer, as well as families.”

Likewise, [Randall Lewis](#), principal of the Lewis Group of companies, said his project “will be very walkable, with very distinctive architecture,” said [Randall Lewis](#), principal of the Lewis Group of companies. “There will be a lot of townhome-style rental homes, lots of garages, lots of open space, and it’s being called Santa Barbara. We’re going to have a great mixture of architecture, land planning and programming.

“I think it will be the most successful project we’ve ever done in Chino Hills for rental.”

Like Chino Hills, communities throughout the region have been working to reduce drive times for residents by approving more mixed-used development, said Councilman Peter Rogers.

“With each project, we’re looking to create a social zone where residents can hang out and socialize, and it’s within a three minute’s walk from their front door,” Rogers said.

Mixed-use projects, said Mayor Art Bennett, appeal to the younger [millennial](#) set, who officials say have a market preference for walkable communities.

“They want immediate and close access to some of the eating establishments and places to shop, and a lot of this can be done on foot or by bicycle, so they don’t have to worry about pulling out a car to get there,” Bennett said.

Gwenn Norton-Perry, a Chino Hills resident who lives near the projects and the city’s first mayor, said mixed-use will be an important facet of city development in the future.

“It’s the next emerging trend for the millenials and real estate,” said Norton-Perry. “I am proud of the city moving forward on a project that will benefit the community.”

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

ONT transfer heading for finish line

By The Editorial Board, San Bernardino County Sun

Thursday, June 23, 2016



L.A./Ontario International Airport took another big step toward local control Tuesday.

The U.S. House passed by voice vote a bill by Rep. Ken Calvert, R-Corona, authorizing the use of passenger facility fees at ONT to help pay off the cost of the airport's two terminals — a condition of the agreement under which Los Angeles World Airports and the city of Los Angeles will turn over control of the facility to the Ontario International Airport Authority.

The agreement calls for OIAA to pay LAWA \$50 million from passenger fees in the first five years and another \$70 million from the fees in the final five years, to reimburse LAWA, a department of L.A. city government, for investments it made at ONT.

“Since it is not possible under existing law, today we are fixing this glitch,” Calvert said.

There was no controversy in passing the bill, which is co-sponsored by area Democrats Normal Torres, Grace Napolitano, Raul Ruiz, Pete Aguilar and Mark Takano, as well as Republicans Paul Cook and Ed Royce. Still, getting legislation through the House is never a sure thing.

And this little matter nearly got caught up in something much bigger. It was part of the Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization, which includes a much-contested effort to privatize air traffic control. So Calvert wisely requested that his HR 4369 be considered separately from the FAA reauthorization, which he noted has already been extended three times.

Once this issue is resolved by passage in the U.S. Senate, the airport transfer agreement will go back to LAWA's commissioners to ratify the funding plan. The transfer of the airport is expected to take place by October.

“The Inland Empire has [been] and continues to be one of the fastest growing regions in California and the nation, and it is far past time that we control our aviation future,” Calvert said on the House floor Tuesday.

Indeed.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/opinion/20160623/ont-transfer-heading-for-finish-line>

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Substandard San Bernardino properties getting RENU'd, rehabilitated

By Ryan Hagen, The Sun

Thursday, June 23, 2016



SAN BERNARDINO >> For at least five years, the heavily vandalized house was visited only by squatters, children curious about the abandoned structure, and city officials who were repeatedly called to secure it.

Now, neighbors and people from around the area came to admire the rehabilitated, five-bedroom home listed for \$394,500 — part of a city initiative to turn around substandard housing and improve neighborhoods.

The open house Thursday drew neighbors, city officials and others to 3121 Bangor Ave. — just a fifth of a mile from the [first house to go through the program](#), at 2942 Bangor Ave.

“The turnaround is very impressive,” said city spokeswoman Monica Lagos. “The open house yesterday, that alone speaks volumes about the program. That was once squatter-prone and had stagnant water in the backyard. Now it’s a viable property that will help neighboring properties.”

The city completed the first project through RENU — Receivership Empowering Neighborhood Upkeep — in April 2015, and the City Attorney’s Office is seeking to expand it.

Lagos could not say Thursday how many properties were in various stages of the program, which involve the court taking control of a property where the owner is unresponsive and appointing a receiver to fix it up. Money from the sale of the property is then used to reimburse the receiver, the city and others involved in the process, so that there is no cost to the city.

Properties are chosen from throughout the city — in this case, a neighborhood on the far eastern part of the city that has Highland mailing addresses but is under the city’s jurisdiction.

From June 2011 to August 2015, the city issued 14 notices and several times secured the property where Thursday’s open house was held. It went into foreclosure and became bank-owned, said Deputy City Attorney Lauren Daniels.

“We sent countless notices to the holder of the mortgage and trust, because there were issues of squatters, and schoolchildren at Serrano (Middle School) were nearby and they would come to the house,” Daniels said. “With the hazardous swimming pool, hazardous pieces of the ceiling coming off — there were numerous code violations.”

The interior of the house was renovated, the pool was redone, water-wise vegetation was planted — and any buyer must sign a covenant agreeing to keep it up, said J. Michelle Higbee, the real estate agent showing the house.

A year after the first San Bernardino house completed the receivership process, neighbors say it’s still making a

world of difference.

“Our new neighbors are amazing,” Sharon Marlow, who lives next door to the other house on Bangor Ave., said Thursday. “Peace and safety has been restored to our neighborhood, because of what the city did to our neighborhood. It’s a very, very good program.”

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/government-and-politics/20160623/substandard-san-bernardino-properties-getting-renud-rehabilitated>

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Security guard 'extremely critical' after being shot at San Bernardino pot dispensary

By John M. Blodgett, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

and Richard Brooks, The Press-Enterprise

Thursday, June 23, 2016



SAN BERNARDINO >> A security guard was in “extremely critical condition” late Thursday night after being shot in the face during a robbery of a medical marijuana dispensary, police said.

The gunfire was reported about 9 p.m. Thursday at 1406 North Waterman Ave., said San Bernardino Police Lt. Brian Harris. After shooting the guard, four suspects fled with an undisclosed amount of cash and pot, he said.

There was no immediate word on whether the victim was able to return fire or how many times he was shot.

After the shooting, police taped off the dispensary’s parking lot and interviewed a handful of witnesses who were inside when the shooting occurred, according to Sgt. Dave Carlson.

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[« REACH-OUT DIRECTOR GOES TO WASHINGTON SUMMIT](#)[JOSHUA TREE LOCAL FOOD PROGRAM MEETS SUNDAY »](#)

SOLAR PROJECT NEAR JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK IS BACK

By Z107.7 News, on June 24th, 2016

It's back. The Palen solar project, which was to be built on public land between Interstate 10 and Joshua Tree National Park about 10 miles east of Desert Center, is rearing its ugly head again. The Bureau of Land Management will hold a meeting at 3:30 p.m. at City Hall in Palm Springs Wednesday to take public comments on the latest resurrection. The project's new developer, San Diego-based EDF Renewable Energy, wants to build a 500-megawatt, 4,200-acre field of solar panels, rather than the 750-foot towers proposed by the project's previous owner. Environmentalists say it would disrupt habitat critical to Mojave fringe-toed lizards, as well as the threatened Agassiz's desert tortoise. The solar project has been abandoned three times. The project's original developer won approval from the California Energy Commission in 2010 but subsequently went bankrupt. BrightSource Energy and Abengoa Solar later swooped in, proposing to build two "power towers" that would have used a field of mirrors to focus sunlight on boilers at the tops of the towers; that plan fell through. BrightSource backed out and Abengoa filed for bankruptcy. Abengoa sold Palen to EDF, which is starting from scratch and has now applied for a new license from the BLM and Riverside County.

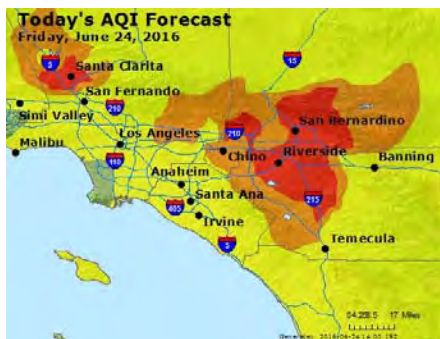
June 24th, 2016 | Tags: [joshua tree](#), [joshua tree national park](#), [solar project](#) | Category: [Local News](#)



ENVIRONMENT: Worst air in the country to linger over the Inland Empire

By [ANNE MILLERBERND](#)

2016-06-24 07:44:16



Some of the most unhealthy air in the country will linger over the Inland Empire on Friday, June 24.

A map from the Air Quality Management District's shows air ranging from moderate to unhealthy - the latter of which makes breathing unsafe for everyone - hanging above the area.

That type of air is going to center itself over San Bernardino, Riverside and Perris areas, according to the AQMD's map.

The poor-quality air is due to unhealthy amounts of ozone. Carbon dioxide and nitrogen are shown at healthy levels on the AQMD's site. The added ozone could be exacerbated by a high-pressure system that's

bringing temperatures up and pushing bad air downward.

Those with lung disease like asthma may experience more severe effects from the air quality, but everyone should limit long-term or exhaustive outdoor activity, the district says.

The only other place in the country with similar air quality is the Inland area's neighbor to the northwest, Santa Clara.

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RIVERSIDE COUNTY: Mistakes allowed girl to attempt suicide

By [BRIAN ROKOS](#)

2016-06-23 17:16:16



The failure of employees of the Riverside County psychiatric facility in Riverside to properly assess and monitor a suicidal 15-year-old girl enabled her to attempt to strangle herself in a locked bathroom, according to the state Department of Public Health.

The girl, who had attempted to hang herself twice in the week before she was admitted, was found with her shirt wrapped around her neck, suffering from a lack of oxygen and in the midst of a seizure, according to the report by state investigators.

Matt Chang, medical director for Riverside University Health System Behavioral Health, said in an interview that the county reported the March

19 incident to the state and has adopted several measures and retrained the staff to prevent a recurrence.

Chang also said mental health facilities across the country face a shortage of psychiatrists. The Department of Public Health, in its report on the Riverside incident, said a psychiatrist did not examine the teen until 2 hours, 11 minutes after she was brought to the facility on County Farm Road – and only after she tried to kill herself.

A psychiatrist told state investigators that the goal is to have psychiatrists examine patients within an hour of their arrival and that the county had been trying to increase staffing but had not accomplished its goal. In three of the four quarters of 2015, according to the state report, the average wait time at the Riverside facility was 1 hour, 40 minutes. In the other quarter, the wait time was almost four hours.

Chang, asked if the suicide attempt would have been prevented if the county had more psychiatrists, said he would not comment directly on the incident.

Although the investigators categorized the incident as substantiated, no enforcement actions are listed for it on the Department of Public Health website. Such actions include fines.

Of the 15 complaints made to the state against all Riverside University Health System facilities in 2016, 13 were found to be unsubstantiated, the public health database says. Of the 18 violations reported by RUHS in 2016, nine were found to be unsubstantiated.

RUHS spokeswoman Kim Trone would not say whether anyone was disciplined, citing state privacy laws.

MONITOR UNAWARE OF RISK

The girl was brought to Emergency Treatment Services on a psychiatric hold because she was considered a danger to herself, a nurse manager told investigators.

She was hearing voices and taking anti-psychotic medicine. She was placed in a room with other juveniles, who were supervised by a “minor monitor.” Although she was seen by a nurse, the state report said, the nurse did not assign a risk level to the girl – to herself or others – as required by facility policy.

The girl told a nurse, “I tried to hang myself but I’m OK now,” the report said.

She should have been placed in a category of “very high risk of imminent harm to self or others,” the report said.

The associate chief nursing officer told investigators that the girl should have been on suicide watch.

Yet the minor monitor told investigators that he did not know specifically why the juveniles were at the facility, that he didn’t know whether they were a risk to themselves or others, and that the nurses did not discuss the new patients’ circumstances as they arrived.

“He stated he was just told to ‘watch them,’” the report said.

Staff members checked on the girl every five minutes while she was in the bathroom. When they knocked on the door and got no response, they opened the door with a key and found her unresponsive. A Riverside Fire Department incident report said she was taken to Parkview Community Hospital Medical Center. She later returned to the psychiatric facility, where a staff member watched her at all times, the state report said.

The monitor said if the juveniles needed to use the bathroom, he would walk them across the hall and allow them to lock the door. If they were in the bathroom longer than he thought they should be, he would knock on the door. He told investigators that had he known any juveniles were suicidal, he would not have allowed them to lock the door.

HOSPITAL SYSTEM MAKES CHANGES

The incident prompted Riverside University Health System to perform a top-to-bottom review of its practices, including those at the flagship hospital in Moreno Valley. Chang would not say why that was done, other than, “We’re always evolving and looking for ways to improve.”

The hospital also in late May contracted with CEP America to have Scott Zeller, who serves on the volunteer faculty at the UC Riverside School of Medicine, to review those practices. CEP America will be paid a maximum of \$50,000, according to the contract.

Riverside University Health System has submitted its corrective action plan to the state, which has not yet made it public.

Zareh Sarrafian, chief executive officer of Riverside University Health System, outlined some of the psychiatric facility’s challenges in a letter to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Sarrafian wrote that patient beds are full, leading some patients to being held at hospital emergency rooms.

“Like much of the rest of the nation, the county of Riverside has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of individuals accessing mental health services,” Sarrafian wrote. “The increased need for this service compounds the existing shortage of psychiatrists. The resulting impact of the shortage of psychiatrists, the shortage of mental health crisis centers and/or treatment centers within the county leaves patients with mild to moderate symptoms untreated, which leads to crisis situations.”

Contact the writer: 951-368-9569 or brokos@pe.com



MASS SHOOTINGS: Tips offered on how to survive

By [SUZANNE HURT](#)

2016-06-23 16:45:39



Run. Hide. Fight.

That's what authorities on how to survive a mass shooting want people to remember if they find themselves under attack.

That mantra is being promoted by the FBI and regional law enforcement experts trying to help meet the public's rising demand for instruction after recent attacks at a Florida nightclub, San Bernardino's Inland Regional Center and others.

Following the June 12 Orlando massacre, police officials shared tips to arm the community with information they hope will shrink the number of people dying at the hands of determined killers in what has become a tragic 21st Century reality.

"It's kind of an evolving industry, because, unfortunately, these things keep happening," said Los Angeles County Sheriff's Sgt. Harry Drucker, a hostage negotiator who produced the department's Los Angeles Area Emmy-nominated public service video, "Surviving an Active Shooter."

"The bottom line is, we are all looking to provide things to help people survive," he said.

IT COULD HAPPEN

Law enforcement experts know most mass shootings are over before police have a chance to get there.

Among those trying to fill the gap in information in Southern California are a San Bernardino County Sheriff's active shooter awareness trainer, a former SWAT team leader and a Los Angeles County Sheriff's deputy.

Florida resident Omar Mateen's Orlando bar rampage, claiming 49 lives and injuring 53 people, has brought the need for the public to learn shooting survival techniques into sharper focus – especially for Inland residents and those who work in the vicinity of the San Bernardino terrorist attack in December.

Three days after the Orlando killings, business owners at a Corona Chamber of Commerce meeting told former Baldwin Park Police Sgt. Greg Keef, a Corona resident, their employees were nervous and stressed at work and wondered how they'd react to such brutality.

Once a SWAT team leader, Keef is holding Active Shooter/Workplace Violence workshops at the Corona chamber Thursday, June 30, and Thursday, July 7, through his Ontario-based private security firm, Triton Global Services.

"For people that don't think it could happen to them or it won't happen here: We've had a terrorist attack in San Bernardino County," said San Bernardino County Sheriff's Deputy Patrick Rasmussen, who works in the Office of County Safety and Security and teaches active shooter preparedness to county employees.

Demand for the county workshops spiked after Dec. 2. A workshop Rasmussen taught once a month at most is now given three to six times a week. Inland Regional Center survivors are among those taking it.

People may think there won't be another mass shooting here, but they could be wrong, he added.

PREPARING IS KEY

School districts are building gun violence training into preparedness programs and Southern Californians are seeking training.

While El Monte police have trained school faculty, business employees and residents even in surrounding communities, most police agencies can't offer classes to the public.

Those that do can't meet the demand, said Drucker, who supervises the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department training bureau's video production unit.

The Department of Homeland Security offers free, all-day active shooter workshops for the public a few times a year at the Riverside County Sheriff's Department's Ben Clark Training Center. A session was held Thursday, June 23.

Drucker and Rasmussen recommend self-defense classes. San Bernardino County offers bi-monthly women's self-defense courses. However, they've been booked five months in advance since Dec. 2.

Businesses such as Keef's are increasingly providing private training. Many people without other options turn to websites and online videos, Drucker said.

Rasmussen, Keef and Drucker tell people that one of their best weapons – besides learning self-defense or carrying a gun after proper training – is to be prepared.

People should visualize how they could respond to an attacker and make plans with co-workers and family about what to do if they're attacked.

Keef advises business owners on how to set up emergency action plans, required in California for companies with more than 10 employees.

At workplaces, he suggests setting up in advance a safe room or hiding spot such as a supervisor's or janitor's office with a door that locks and opens inward.

"It's something where everybody knows, 'If I can get to this safe room, we're going to lock it down as best we can,'" Rasmussen said.

RUN

To be prepared, experts recommend always looking at where exits are and where to hide, whether it's a bar, workplace, restaurant, mall or stadium. Think about an escape route and where you can escape to.

Bolt in the other direction once gunfire is seen or heard.

If gunfire is seen or heard, bolt in the other direction.

"Run. That's your best option," Keef said.

People may have to first assess the situation to know where the bullets are coming from.

Gunfire may not sound real. People might think they're hearing fireworks or a car backfiring until they process the scene around them.

Some Orlando shooting victims froze. They didn't understand the attack was really happening or couldn't process it, Keef said.

"Everything is seconds," he said. "We don't want to delay anything in a situation like that."

Running is especially important in a big space, such as a club dance floor, where there's no place to hide.

Darting in a zig-zag pattern would be ideal, but most people fleeing a shooter won't think of it, Rasmussen said.

Run toward police, who have likely cleared the area behind them. But don't have anything in your hands when you run out of a building. Leave cell phones behind if you have nowhere else to put them.

"Law enforcement needs to see there's nothing in your hands," Keef said.

Shooters may try to blend in with fleeing people so they can leave undetected.

HIDE

Hiding is the next best option. People may need to hide until they can assess the threat, then run. Pick a spot that doesn't restrict movement and turn off cell phones.

Continually reassess options. People may need to run, hide and/or fight more than once, and not in that order, Rasmussen said.

Know the difference between cover, which protects people physically, and concealment, which blocks them from view temporarily.

Cubicle desks in most offices won't block a bullet, said Rasmussen, who urges people to put as much stuff between themselves and the bad guy's bullets as possible.

He helped lead the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Workplace Violence and Active Shooter Awareness Conference at Victoria Gardens in October. The event will be repeated in November.

Block the door with furniture or cabinets weighted with books. During the 2007 Virginia Tech shooting, students in one classroom rammed desks and anything they could find against the door.

The frustrated gunman shot through the door and hit a guy in the leg, but he survived. At least one person died in every other room, where doors weren't blocked, Rasmussen said.

Backpacks can be filled with thick books and worn front and back to help protect vital organs.

A heavy wooden or metal desk may help stop rounds from a handgun or shotgun, but not assault rifles. The weapons used in the San Bernardino and Orlando attacks fired bullets at 3,200 feet per second.

"If you're talking about an assault rifle, there are very few things in the building that will stop that round," Keef said. "Even our officers on the streets – our body armor is not going to stop those rounds."

FIGHT

Fighting should be people's last resort.

While hiding, look for anything to use as improvised weapons, such as a flag pole, fire extinguisher or chairs.

Plan a counter-attack with others. Two people can hold up a desk to shield a third person who hits the shooter with something. A fourth person can throw something at the shooter or make distracting noise, such as breaking a window, from the other direction, Keef said.

It may be possible to disrupt the shooter's senses or motor skills. Jab pens into the eyes, spray or throw liquids in the face, injure the gun arm or hand, knock the shooter's legs out from under him.

"The mindset is, somebody's trying to kill you," Drucker said. "And you don't hold back."

If someone's hiding place is found, they'll have no choice but to take on the shooter.

"Fight for your life. Fight to get back to your family," Rasmussen said. "Use whatever means you have available to you."

"Unfortunately, the way things are in the world right now, we all have to have that kind of mentality," he said.

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The New York Times | <http://nyti.ms/28J6lom>

U.S.

Shooting Victims' Families Watch as Gun Measures Stall Once Again

By SHERYL GAY STOLBERG JUNE 20, 2016

WASHINGTON — They are members of the Club Nobody Wants to Be a Part Of. And their numbers are growing.

With every mass shooting in America, a somber scene replays itself here. Victims' families and survivors of massacres — Columbine, Virginia Tech, Aurora, Tucson, Sandy Hook, Charleston, San Bernardino — traipse up to Capitol Hill. They knock on lawmakers' doors, attend news conferences and bear witness to Senate votes on gun measures that almost never pass.

So there was a sense of déjà vu here on Monday as the Senate rejected four gun safety measures, one week after the Pulse nightclub massacre, which killed 49 and injured 53, in Orlando, Fla.

Erica Lafferty Smegielski, 30, whose mother was the principal killed in the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Connecticut, spent the day wandering the corridors of Congress with Colin Goddard, also 30, whose body still holds three bullets fired by the gunman at Virginia Tech in 2007. They stopped for a quick bite in a cafeteria, and ran into Patricia Maisch, 67, who, in 2011, was waiting in Tucson to have a picture taken with her congresswoman, Gabrielle Giffords, and helped end the massacre by grabbing the gunman's ammunition clip. They all hugged.

“It’s like, every time we come together for something like this, there is someone new we are introduced to for the first time, and we know the road that’s ahead of them,” said Ms. Smegielski over a basket of chicken nuggets. A tattoo honoring her mother is on her right arm.

She looked at Mr. Goddard, to her right; both work for Everytown for Gun Safety, an advocacy organization backed by Michael R. Bloomberg, the former New York mayor. “Just like you were there for me three years ago,” she told him. “And now, I’m somebody’s Colin.”

Mrs. Maisch had cut short a family reunion in St. Louis to be here for the vote. In 2013, when the Senate voted against gun safety measures that President Obama pushed for after the Sandy Hook shooting, she stood up in the Senate gallery, looked down at the lawmakers and shouted, “Shame on you!” She was escorted out by the police and detained for two hours.

On Monday, she wore an orange button that read “Survivor” and a collection of colored plastic wristbands, each one representing a shooting victim. One was for a congressional candidate from Wisconsin whose mother killed herself. One was for Jordan Davis, a 17-year-old student shot in Florida, by someone who complained about his loud music. One was for Dawn Hochsprung, Ms. Smegielski’s mother.

“These are all people I know,” she said.

Gun safety advocates said they were not aware of any survivors or relatives from Orlando here; it was simply too soon, they said. Lori Haas, whose daughter was badly injured at Virginia Tech, and who is now the Virginia state director of the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, was in Orlando with family members on Monday.

“This is like a very, very, very bad Groundhog Day movie,” she said in a telephone interview from the offices of Equality Florida, a gay rights advocacy group.

Her presence there suggests a possible change after the rampage at Pulse, a gay nightclub. Leaders of the gay rights movement, which is well-organized and well-funded, are now putting their muscle behind gun safety.

Dan Gross, president of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, said gun

safety advocates hope to pattern their efforts after the campaign to legalize same-sex marriage. If they cannot win in Washington, they will try to win in the states. They cite some progress: Since the Sandy Hook shooting, 42 states have passed some sort of gun safety legislation, according to the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence. Mr. Gross' group helped run a social media campaign using the hashtag #DisarmHate; he said it resulted in 150,000 telephone calls to lawmakers last week — 10 times the number of calls the movement generated after last year's massacre in San Bernardino, Calif.

“There's a moment for every great issue and every great movement — usually in hindsight — that when you look back and say, ‘That's when things started to change,’” he said. “And for the issue of gun violence, that moment is now.”

As senators voted on Monday, advocates with the Brady campaign sat in the gallery wearing orange T-shirts with the slogan #Enough Gun Violence. Afterward, Ms. Smegielski dabbed tears from her eyes. Mrs. Maisch said she was not surprised.

Tina Meins, whose father was killed in San Bernardino, watched the vote from afar; she had been here last week to attend a news conference with Senator Christopher S. Murphy, a Connecticut Democrat who held a 15-hour filibuster intended to force his colleagues to take up the issue of guns.

She, like the others, expected the measures to fail. The life of a gun-safety advocate, she said, can be “extremely frustrating.” And the club is growing. “In San Bernardino, we had 14 families,” Ms. Meins said. “Now we have 49.”

A version of this article appears in print on June 21, 2016, on page A12 of the New York edition with the headline: Victims' Families Watch as Gun Measures Stall.

What's Behind California's Sudden Urge to Help the Homeless?

It's the Rich, Now Crowded Next to the Destitute in the Housing-Crunched State, Who Are Driving Politicians' Newfound Attentiveness

By Joe Mathews.

How did homelessness suddenly become such a hot issue across California? There are many reasons, and few of them have anything to do with people who are homeless.

Those reasons—economic anxiety, budget surpluses, tax schemes, housing prices, prison reform, health care expansion, urban wealth, and political opportunism have combined to create today's “homeless moment” in California.

For decades, combating homelessness has been a civic obsession in the San Francisco Bay Area, with its long tradition of progressive politics and generous homeless services. Now that homeless hubbub has spread statewide. To the surprise of many at the State Capitol, a \$2 billion bond to pay for housing for the mentally ill homeless—previously a backburner issue in tax-and-education-obsessed Sacramento—became a central focus of this month's budget negotiations. And around the state, local law enforcement officials have stirred the pot by claiming that recent measures to reduce the California prison population have exacerbated the homeless problem.

In Los Angeles, which has the nation's second largest homeless population according to federal figures, homelessness has become the dominant political debate. Mayor Eric Garcetti has talked big about addressing the problem—declaring an emergency, promising that no military veterans will be living on the street—and now faces criticism for weak follow-up. L.A.'s city and county governments are now ensnared in huge debates about how to pay for additional public housing.

A similar pattern—of big plans to end homelessness followed by conflict about how to do it—has emerged in cities from Redding to Riverside. In San Diego, with America's fourth largest homeless population, a leading city councilman called for ending all homelessness by the end of this year. (He's since backed off). In Orange County, there have been calls for a “homeless czar” to speed up the building of shelters and housing. In Fresno, Mayor Ashley Swearengin just held a press conference at the city's baseball stadium to tout a plan to end homelessness in the next three years. In Sacramento, homelessness was a leading issue in the just-concluded mayoral election, with the victor pledging to build more housing for the homeless.

Given all this drama, you might expect that the number of homeless people is rapidly rising. To the contrary, homeless counts (the accuracy of which is another big debate) show relatively flat or even declining homeless populations in most of these cities. So why the sudden urgency? The short answer: the homeless are now more visible to the rich people who drive civic conversation. Fancy restaurants and new high-end housing have brought wealthy folks into urban neighborhoods and old industrial areas that once were havens for the

homeless. Downtown L.A., home to a large population of unsheltered homeless for decades, has rapidly been transformed from one of the most affordable to one of the most expensive places to live in the city.

At the same time, anxiety about housing has never run deeper. The housing crisis of the previous decade cost many Californians their homes. California's total failure to build housing—we've produced just one new unit for every eight new Californians in this decade—has led to sky-high prices. Many Californians are forced to spend more than half of their incomes on housing, and the prospect of sleeping on the street no longer seems so unlikely.

Politicians, who read polls showing this growing fear, have seized on the opening. Homelessness has become an almost perfect issue for politicians. Expectations of success are low (homelessness is persistent) so any progress can be spun as heroic. Few homeless people vote, so democratic accountability is close to nothing. And the issue doesn't have a strong partisan profile, so there is room for political horse-trading and risk-taking.

In an extraordinary public letter late last year, Santa Cruz Mayor Don Lane urged experiments with different approaches to the problem—and took himself to task for not having done so previously. "I am as responsible as anyone in this community for our failure to address our lack of shelter and our over-reliance on law enforcement and the criminal justice system to manage homelessness," he wrote. "I have been a direct participant in many of my city's decisions on homelessness. I have failed to adequately answer many of the questions I am posing."

Such self-criticism is easier for politicians when money is on the way. The federal government has stepped up funding for housing the homeless—especially for veterans. The state is running a surplus, and a state fund for mental health services, funded by the Proposition 63 tax on millionaires, is so full of extra dollars that even Gov. Brown, a notorious tightwad, agreed to borrow \$2 billion from it to fund housing and other services for the homeless. He and the legislature also threw another \$400 million in affordable housing dollars into the budget.

In some places, the notion of a homelessness emergency is seen as a justification for a money grab. L.A. County supervisors want the state—which famously limits local taxation—to permit them to impose their own millionaire's tax to pay for more homeless programs. That money, of course, could free up other funds for other purposes—which is all the more reason to decree a homelessness emergency.

To be fair, much of this money will be spent on a strategy that has shown some success—providing permanent supportive housing for the homeless. This housing-oriented approach is a welcome departure from decades of efforts to fix the ills of the homeless—be they substance abuse or trauma or mental illness—before getting them housing.

But the focus on housing is narrow for a problem this complex. And today's windfall for homeless services is unlikely, in California's volatile budget system, to last. Even if it did, the disparate nature of the funding—a bundle of incentives and grants—isn't efficient enough to create the capacity to cover the fluid and shifting homeless populations in California cities.

In his acclaimed new book, *Evicted*, Harvard professor Matthew Desmond argues that ending homelessness would require greater ambition than anything on the table in California, or anywhere else in the U.S. He advocates "universal housing" as a clear right, like the well-established right to public education.

Under Desmond's proposal, the government would issue housing vouchers to families below a certain income threshold so that they pay no more than 30 percent of their income on housing. The vouchers could be used to live anywhere they wanted—just as families use food stamps to buy groceries almost anywhere.

Such rental assistance is common in other developed countries like Britain and the Netherlands, which don't suffer from American-style homelessness. In the U.S., universal housing via vouchers would cost \$60 billion, Desmond estimates—real money, but a mere fraction of the hundreds of billions spent subsidizing the housing of wealthier people via the mortgage-interest tax deduction.

Universal housing wouldn't have much chance of passage in Washington. But universal housing is just the sort of idea that California should try—if this homeless moment is really about ending homelessness.



EDITORIAL: Local decisions can worsen housing crisis

2016-06-23 18:10:01

Anyone not living under a rock knows that housing is too expensive in California.

Builders and elected officials grappled with the affordability crisis last week in Ontario at a policy conference put on annually by the Building Industry Association's Baldy View Chapter.

Urban planner and consultant Wendell Cox, co-author of the Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey, was there to put the problem into numeric terms.

Mr. Cox, a former Los Angeles County transportation commissioner, holds that before states, counties and cities put so many restrictions on home building – what he calls “urban containment” politics – most places had “median multiples” less than three, meaning that a median house cost three times the area’s median household income.

But that has changed. Mr. Cox’s Demographia survey found that the Riverside-San Bernardino metropolitan market’s median multiple stands at an unaffordable 5.2 – with median household income of \$56,500 and median home price of \$292,500.

That exacerbates the region’s high poverty rate, removing money from pockets – for rent or mortgage payments – that might be better spent improving standards of living.

According to the Mt. Baldy BIA, San Bernardino County’s housing shortage will reach 31,000 residential units this year and 65,000 by 2019. Only 5,700 new units will be built this year, with estimated direct economic impact of \$670 million. If two-thirds of the projected shortfall were built this year, the impact would be \$2.15 billion, the BIA says.

Builders emphasize that local electeds can smooth the way for faster housing development. Cities, for example, can streamline their permitting and approval processes, and engage builders in the decision-making process, so that they don’t inadvertently slow things down by adding requirements in a vacuum.

And they’re pleading with school districts to hold off on raising development fees.

Meanwhile, a new \$9 billion state school bond measure has qualified for the November ballot; if it passes, matching state funds would be available again.

We’re not endorsing the state bond measure – we’ll consider November ballot measures later – but we support holding off on hiking development fees, which would only further raise the price of homes for new buyers.

The next generation is being priced out of our region, and we have to stop making it worse.

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Inland Valley Daily Bulletin (<http://www.dailybulletin.com>)

More hypocrisy from California legislators on environmental law

By The Editorial Board, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Thursday, June 23, 2016



California's overabundance of regulations has poisoned its business climate, suppressed economic and job growth and micromanaged its citizens' personal lives. One of the biggest offenders is the California Environmental Quality Act, signed into law in 1970, which has killed, delayed or increased the cost of many a development project — including affordable housing, renewable energy, transit and other projects that environmentalists should favor.

Perhaps no major regulation better illustrates how laws implemented with high-minded justifications tend to be not only burdensome but abused for reasons unrelated to their initial purposes and ignored when they become inconvenient for legislators or the special interests who influence them.

The latest example of the Legislature's capriciousness with regard to CEQA is a provision in the current budget deal that would streamline the CEQA process for a \$1.3 billion project to renovate or replace the Capitol annex building. The provision, which echoes language used three years ago to provide an exemption for a new arena for the Sacramento Kings basketball team, would expedite judicial review of CEQA lawsuits and allow portions of the project not subject to specific challenges to proceed while other aspects of the project are being litigated.

CEQA is regularly abused to “greenmail” developers into accepting concessions that have nothing to do with environmental quality. The threat of CEQA lawsuits has been used by unions to impose project labor agreements that mandate the use of union workers and higher union wages, by businesses to prevent competitors from moving in, and by local governments and NIMBYs to extract additional facilities or design features from developers.

CEQA reform has long been on the mind of environmental champion Gov. Jerry Brown. But he has not convinced the Legislature to adopt meaningful reforms.

Exemptions from CEQA for politically-connected interests — particularly for the building that houses most legislators, or an arena for their hometown team — are evidence of both the inequity of the law and the decadence and hypocrisy of the Legislature. CEQA should be substantially reformed to prevent lawsuit abuses and focus on legitimate environmental concerns while leaving people free to develop property without undue hassle and expense.

LOCAL / L.A. Now

Los Angeles may pass new ban on homeless people living in cars



Thomas Goodwin, 54, sings a song with his daughter Leilani Miranda Duenez Goodwin, 7, while driving through the streets of Santa Barbara. The Goodwin's have been living homeless in their van. (Genaro Molina / Los Angeles Times)

By **Gale Holland**

JUNE 23, 2016, 5:27 PM

More than 4,600 cars and RVS were in use as living quarters this year in Los Angeles, a rise that has sparked bitter complaints that homeless people are taking up scarce street parking, dumping trash and bringing increased crime and safety risks into neighborhoods.

A federal appeals court last year struck down the city's ban on vehicle dwelling, calling it an invitation to discriminate against the poor. Now, what could be a new legal confrontation with homeless advocates is shaping up as the City Council is poised Friday to adopt a new ban that could link enforcement to providing restricted parking for homeless people to sleep in their cars.

At the city's homelessness and poverty committee Wednesday, Councilman [Mike Bonin](#) proposed barring homeless people from "lodging" in vehicles parked by homes and schools, while allowing them to sleep in their cars and campers from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. in commercial areas and in designated city, nonprofit agency and

church lots.

Bonin said his proposal could forestall a more sweeping ban and avoid repeating what he called “absurd and pathetic” scenarios of the past, when police would ask people to get out of their cars to sleep on the sidewalks.

“That was absolutely nuts,” he said before the committee approved his motion for consideration by the full council.

Legal advocates testified that the revised ban, which would include a misdemeanor penalty, would criminalize the poor.

“They are the working poor, and we need to not make them criminals,” said civil rights attorney Carol Sobel, who represented Venice vehicle dwellers in the lawsuit that led to the old ban being overturned.

“I have a feeling we’re likely to get sued,” Bonin said, to applause from the largely anti-ban audience.

Bonin’s initiative, based largely on the “safe parking” program in the city of Santa Barbara, would permit small groups of campers, vans or cars – perhaps three to five per site – to stay overnight in parking lots throughout the city. The inhabitants would have to sign up for social services to work their way out of their vehicles.

To “incentivize” buy-in, council members who create a ‘critical mass’ of safe parking spaces could ban car dwellers altogether in their districts, Bonin said. If the city fails to launch a safe parking program by year’s end, the ban would be lifted citywide.

The homelessness committee in March failed to link expansion of free storage for homeless people to a council measure that made it easier to clear street encampments. The expansion is still on hold.

Reached by phone Thursday, Mark Ryavec, president of the Venice Stakeholders Assn., said it is more difficult to distance safe parking from residences in L.A. than in Santa Barbara because of the larger city’s density.

Beach lots in Venice, which Bonin said could be considered for inclusion, are inappropriate, said Ryavec, adding that Dockweiler Beach or LAX lots are better choices. Ryavec said many of the RV dwellers in Venice are not homeless but people who want to live at the beach for free.

“We think this should have buffer zones” to separate residents from car dwellers, he said. Locations should ensure that “drug sales, fights, whatever, not be in anybody’s face.”

Homeless advocates said the city would never come up with enough parking spaces, leaving people forced to live in their vehicles susceptible to police harassment.

Councilman Marqueece Harris-Dawson recalled the 1998 shooting death of Tyisha Miller, a 19-year-old black woman killed by Riverside Police Department officers who saw her passed out in a car with a gun on her lap.

“It lets the officer make the judgment about who’s living in the car and who’s sleeping,” said Harris-Dawson,

who is black. “Where I come from you don’t get the benefit of the doubt, you get guilt.”

Bonin said “there is a great likelihood the council will pass some version” of a ban.

“Absent trying to force creation of safe places,” he said, “we’ll wind up with a prohibition with no places for people to park.”

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Follow me for homelessness news on Twitter: [@geholland](https://twitter.com/geholland)

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This article is related to: [Homelessness](#), [Los Angeles City Council](#), [Mike Bonin](#)

DAN WALTERS JUNE 23, 2016 4:24 PM

Fixing California's bad highways ensnarled in political gridlock

HIGHLIGHTS

Gov. Brown wants to raise taxes for more repairs

However, public is opposed to paying more at pump

Republicans demanding CEQA reforms



BY DAN WALTERS
dwalters@sacbee.com

California's highways are in bad shape and getting worse every day, with a backlog of deferred maintenance totaling tens of billions of dollars.

OPINION

Gov. Jerry Brown says we should be spending \$8 billion a year on repairs, but are actually spending less than a third of that, which means the backlog is growing by nearly \$6 billion.

Oddly, however, the repair program Brown is offering to the Legislature would average just \$3.6 billion a year, and much would be spent on transit or shared with local governments. All in all, highways would get just \$16.2 billion over 10 years, a fraction of the unmet maintenance needs.

Even were the Legislature to go along, therefore, the backlog would continue to grow, meaning the highways would become even rougher and more dangerous. We might even displace No. 1 New Jersey as having the nation's absolutely worst roadways.

California motorists are already paying some of the nation's highest gasoline taxes, and while polls indicate they want highway spending to increase, they're not willing to pay higher taxes for it – an illogical attitude that permeates the issue.

Brown's \$36 billion, 10-year fix-it plan includes a \$65 annual fee on all vehicles, an increase in gas taxes by freezing the periodic adjustments tied to price that have recently dropped taxes sharply, boosting diesel fuel taxes paid mostly by truck operators, and pumping in \$500 million from cap-and-trade carbon emission auctions.

The latter is somewhat ironic, since the last auction fell flat and revenue may be close to zero for years to come.

So, one might ask, given that our gas taxes are already quite high, and under Brown's plan, highways would deteriorate more, is it worth doing?

One could argue that something is better than nothing, but if the something consumes all the political energy and makes further progress impossible for at least 10 years, maybe we should allow the crisis to reach the stage where doing a real fix is inescapable. Maybe doing a little bit is just political cover.

It should be noted, too, that this tokenism, if enacted, would do nothing about expanding capacity to handle the inevitable increase in traffic that accompanies population growth.

We are already No. 1 in congestion, but the prevailing ethos in Sacramento, as laid out in a new Brown administration transportation plan, is to avoid adding capacity, in hopes of compelling Californians to shift from cars to mass transit – even though transit systems are, overall, losing patronage, not gaining it.

The main political hangup for even Brown's token highway plan is the reluctance of Republican legislators, who would have to provide at least a few votes for new taxes.

They appear to be demanding reforms, such as an overhaul of the California Environmental Quality Act, although it could merely be an excuse to avoid voting for taxes.

However, Democrats are unwilling to change CEQA, even as they give certain favored projects – including sports arenas and a new legislative office building – exemptions.

It's really quite a mess – traffic gridlock on roadways, confusion in the public and political gridlock in the Capitol.

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LOCAL / L.A. Now

80 homes burned, 1,500 threatened in 'extremely dangerous, extremely volatile' fire in Kern County



By **Joseph Serna, Nina Agrawal and Alexia Fernandez**

JUNE 24, 2016, 6:25 AM | REPORTING FROM LAKE ISABELLA, CALIF.

A

t least 80 homes have burned and 1,500 others are threatened by a wildfire racing across Kern County that grew to 8,000 acres in less than 24 hours and quickly became the state's most destructive fire of the year.

Authorities said they were overwhelmed by the fire, which pushed into rural communities Thursday evening so quickly that firefighters could not keep up with the inferno. They said years of drought combined with heat and strong winds created the devastating conditions.

The Erskine fire was burning off Erskine Creek Road just south of Highway 178, near Lake Isabella in Squirrel Valley. The blaze is “extremely dangerous, extremely volatile,” said Kern County Fire Capt. Tyler Townsend.

“I’ve never been in a wildland fire where I’ve seen so many homes burn,” said Townsend, who has been in the area for nearly a decade. “It’s one of the most devastating I’ve ever seen.”

The blaze raced across 11 miles in 13 hours while firefighters raced to try to protect rural neighborhoods.

"Firefighters from all agencies ... have been engaged in a firefight of epic proportions trying to save every structure possible," said Kern County Fire Chief Brian Marshall at a news conference Friday morning. "In a situation like this there's not enough fire trucks and firefighters to put in front of every structure ... they're working whole neighborhoods."

Marshall estimated that at least 100 structures -- including 80 homes -- have been destroyed by the fire, but he said an accurate count wouldn't be available until after sunrise.

The wind-pushed fire was uncontained and chewing through dead grass and big trees parched by years of drought. Hundreds of firefighters were flooding the area Friday morning to join in the effort, officials said.

The fire is threatening the small communities of South Fork, Weldon, Onyx, Lakeland Estates, Yankee Canyon and Mountain Mesa.

About 300 firefighters were available to fight the flames Thursday night, but that number was expected to double Friday, Townsend said. Three firefighters have suffered smoke inhalation, officials said.

Video from local TV stations showed the fire moving rapidly down a hillside and into a neighborhood of homes. Another video from the Kern County Fire Department showed some structures engulfed in flames as a large air tanker flew over the blaze.

On Thursday, Cathy Berlin sat with her three dogs and some family members at the entrance of an evacuation center at the Kern River Valley Senior Center in Lake Isabella, wondering what would come next.

"We lost our house, I've lived in that house for as long as I've lived here, 14 years," she said. "Now we've got nothing."

Berlin's house, a mobile home, was one of several that burned in the flames of the Erskine fire. She said she in Los Angeles, taking a friend to the hospital, when she heard of the fire.

"It took me five hours to get here, even though I went 90 miles per hour," she said. "My family got out, but they didn't have time to take anything except the dogs."

Some houses were already little more than embers on the ground, while others were deep in flames.

Smoky haze could be seen for miles, and orange flames lighted the evening air as planes and helicopters made drops.

Conditions were the worst they could have been for a fire, said Geri Jackson, a spokeswoman with the Sequoia National Forest, one of several agencies responding to the blaze. Temperatures were in the high 90s, humidity was in the single digits and low teens, and the area was just coming off a weeklong wind advisory.

"The wind, the heat and the low humidity -- all that does is just drive a fire," Jackson said. "When the fire initially started, it took off quickly."

Power was out at 6,488 homes, a representative from Southern California Edison said. AT&T cell service was also out, making it difficult for residents to communicate with loved ones and officials.

In addition to the evacuation center at the Senior Center at 6405 Lake Isabella Blvd., evacuees were being sheltered at Kern Valley High School at 3340 Erskine Creek Road. A local television station reported long lines of people at the high school, waiting to use a land line to make a phone call.

Also, Kernville Elementary School, "Home of the Mountaineers," was home to more than 100 people who were evacuated from their homes in Lake Isabella on Thursday night.

Ramon Williams sat leaning against the school sign for Kernville Elementary looking at the ground, red-eyed and in disbelief.

"That place shouldn't have burnt down," he said. "We kept our yard clean. We got three acres."

Williams lost his mobile home to the Erskine fire, leaving with just the clothes he wore.

"I don't have anything," he said. "This is all I've got."

Williams said he escaped from his home in Weldon with his wife and 10-year-old granddaughter.

“

**You couldn't even see, you were just choking on it.
When we got out, the sky was bright orange. It
was like something out of the Bible.**

— Ramon Williams, lost his mobile home in fire

"You couldn't even see, you were just choking on it," he said. "When we got out, the sky was bright orange. It was like something out of the Bible."

Williams said he has fire insurance but doesn't know if he would rebuild a home on the same land.

"After tonight, everything's gonna change," he said. "I don't know what will happen next."

The Kern County blaze is the latest of several major brush fires to hit Southern and Central California in the last two weeks.

In Santa Barbara County, the Sherpa fire forced hundreds to flee their homes north of Santa Barbara last week. This week, two fires in the hills above Azusa and Duarte forced more evacuations.

In San Diego County, firefighters increased containment Thursday of the Border fire just north of the U.S.-Mexico border that prompted mandatory evacuations for the entire east county community of Potrero. The Border fire has burned 6,840 acres, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

The Border fire has destroyed four outbuildings and left three firefighters with minor injuries. The cause is under investigation.

Temperatures in the Los Angeles, Ventura and Santa Barbara county mountains and valleys hovered in the 90s Thursday, but they could climb into the 100s by the weekend while coinciding with a drop in humidity and strong winds, [National Weather Service](#) meteorologist Todd Hall said.

A red-flag warning -- meaning weather conditions are prime for a fast-moving, destructive wildfire -- was in effect for the those three counties, while a heat advisory was expected in Orange, San Diego and Riverside counties, the weather service said.

Weather conditions will get worse through the weekend, Hall said.

For breaking California news, follow [@JosephSerna](#)

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ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Hot-button initiatives fill November ballot

By [MARTIN WISCKOL](#)

2016-06-22 16:37:35



Updated to delete a minimum wage proposal that had qualified but was withdrawn by proponents June 23.

A list of 20 or so ballot measures can turn into a mind-numbing journey to obscure corners of government financing and bureaucracy.

Not this time.

Pot, the death penalty, condoms, plastic bags, the price of drugs, English only, Citizens United ... There's a deep pile of hot-button initiatives on the November ballot that even non-voters are likely to have an opinion on.

Here are the eight that so far have been determined to have filed adequate signatures to appear before voters, the two that have been put on the ballot by state legislators and a quick look at others likely to qualify:

Overturn Citizens United. This largely symbolic proposal asks whether California's elected officials "should use all of their constitutional authority" to overturn the U.S. Supreme Court's Citizens United ruling, which cleared the way for unlimited federal campaign spending by special interests via political action committees. It would take an act of Congress -- and possibly a constitutional amendment -- to void the ruling.

Gun control. If approved, this would ban all existing large-capacity magazines, require a background check and state authorization to buy ammunition, and would required lost or stolen guns to be reported to law enforcement.

Reverse the plastic bag ban. The referendum, backed by the plastic bag industry, seeks to overturn a Legislature-approved ban on grocery stores and certain other retailers from using plastic bags. The statewide measure has been put on hold pending the vote, although bag opponents have continued to win city and county bans.

Ease the "English only" teaching requirement. This would relax the mandates of 1998's Prop. 227, which largely eliminated bilingual education and mandated that non-English speakers be taught in English with limited exceptions.

Repeal the death penalty. This would replace the state's death penalty with life in prison without the possibility of parole.

State fees on hospitals. The measure would make it more difficult for the Legislature to reduce state fees levied on hospitals that receive Medi-Care funding, and eliminates the January 2018 termination date for the existing law restricting reductions. Those fees are earmarked for uninsured patients and child-health programs.

Prescription drug price controls. This proposition would set the maximum cost for prescription drugs purchased by any state agency at the price paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Condoms in film. Performers engaging in sexual intercourse while being filmed would be required to wear condoms.

Voters' choice on bonds. OK, so there are a couple wonky initiatives. This one would require voter approval for any state revenue bonds exceeding \$2 billion.

School bonds. This would authorize \$9 billion for new K-12 schools and community college construction, and for renovations and repairs.

Another eight measures are in the process of having signatures verified. Most are expected to make the ballot, including measures that would legalize recreational marijuana, expedite the state's death penalty process, increase the cigarette tax and limit the salaries of hospital executives.

Governor's appointments

A couple recent appointments by Gov. Jerry Brown:

Rachelle Weir, 46, of Anaheim, has been appointed programs manager for the California Exposition and State Fair. Weir has been exhibit supervisor for Orange County Fair and Event Center since 2006, and has worked there in other jobs since 1993. The salary is \$81,600. Weir is a Republican.

Leah Brew, 49, of Brea, has been reappointed to the California Board of Behavioral Sciences, where she has served since 2012. Brew has served as chair and professor in the California State University, Fullerton Department of Counseling since 2001. The position pays a \$100 per diem. Brew is a Democrat.

Contact the writer: mwisckol@ocregister.com

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